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ON THE
POWER
OF THE
SUPREME BEING.
A
POETICAL ESSAY.

By CHRISTOPHER SMART, M.A.
Of Pembroke-Hall in the University of Cambridge.

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MDCCLIV.

ON THE
POWERS
OF THE
SUPREMACY

FOOTNOTES



BY CHRISTOPHER SMART, M.A.
OF LINCOLN'S INN, in the University of Cambridge

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1844.

A Clause of Mr. SEATON's Will,
Dated Oct. 8. 1738.

I Give my Kislinbury Estate to the University of Cambridge forever: the Rents of which shall be disposed of yearly by the Vice-Chancellor for the time being, as he the Vice-Chancellor, the Master of Clare Hall, and Greek Professor for the time being, or any two of them shall agree. Which three persons aforesaid shall give out a Subject, which Subject shall for the first Year be one or other of the Perfections or Attributes of the Supreme Being, and so the succeeding Years, till the Subject is exhausted; and afterwards the Subject shall be either Death, Judgement, Heaven, Hell, Purity of heart, &c. or whatever else may be judged by the Vice-Chancellor, Master of Clare Hall, and Greek Professor to be most conducive to the honour of the Supreme Being and recommendation of Virtue. And they shall yearly dispose of the Rent of the above Estate to that Master of Arts, whose Poem on the Subject given shall be best approved by them. Which Poem I ordain to be always in English, and to be printed; the expence of which shall be deducted out of the product of the Estate, and the residue given as a reward for the Composer of the Poem, or Ode, or Copy of Verses.

WE the underwritten, do assign Mr. SEATON's Reward to C. SMART, M.A. for his Poem on *The Power of the Supreme Being*, and direct the said Poem to be printed, according to the tenor of the Will.

Dec. 5. 1753.

P. Yonge Vice-Chancellor.
J. Wilcox Master of Clare Hall.
Tho. Francklin Greek Professor.

(10)

ON THE
P O W E R
OF THE
SUPREME BEING.

"**T**REMBLE, thou earth! th' anointed poet said,
At God's bright presence, tremble, all ye
mountains

And all ye hillocks on the surface bound."

Then once again, ye glorious thunders roll,

The Muse with transport hears ye, once again

Convulse the solid continent, and shake,

Grand

Grand musick of omnipotence, the isles.
 'Tis thy terrific voice, thou God of power,
 'Tis thy terrific voice; all Nature hears it
 Awaken'd and alarm'd; she feels its force,
 In every spring she feels it, every wheel,
 And every movement of her vast machine.
 Behold! quakes Apennine, behold! recoils
 Athos, and all the hoary-headed Alps
 Leap from their bases at the godlike sound.
 But what is this, celestial tho' the note,
 And proclamation of the reign supreme,
 Compar'd with such as, for a mortal ear
 Too great, amaze the incorporeal worlds?
 Shou'd ocean to his congregated waves
 Call in each river, cataract, and lake,
 And with the watry world down an huge rock
 Fall headlong in one horrible cascade,
 Twere but the echo of the parting breeze,
 When Zephyr faints upon the lilly's breast,
 'Twere

'Twere but the ceasing of some instrument,
 When the last ling'ring undulation
 Dies on the doubting ear, if nam'd with sounds
 So mighty! so stupendous! so divine!

But not alone in the aërial vault
 Does he the dread theocracy maintain;
 For oft, enrag'd with his intestine thunders,
 He harrows up the bowels of the earth,
 And shocks the central magnet. — Cities then
 Totter on their foundations, stately columns,
 Magnific walls, and heav'n-affaulting spires.
 What tho' in haughty eminence erect
 Stands the strong citadel, and frowns defiance
 On adverse hosts, tho' many a bastion jut
 Forth from the ramparts elevated mound,
 Vain the poor providence of human art,
 And mortal strength how vain! while underneath
 Triumphs his mining vengeance in th' uproar
 Of shatter'd towers, riven rocks, and mountains,

With

With clamour inconceivable uptorn,
 And hurl'd adown th' abyfs. Sulphureous pyrites
 Burſting abrupt from darkneſs into day,
 With din outrageous and deſtructive ire
 Augment the hideous tumult, while it wounds
 Th' afflicted ear, and terrifies the eye,
 And rends the heart in twain. Twice have we felt,
 Within Auguſta's walls twice have we felt
 Thy threaten'd indignation, but ev'n Thou,
 Incens'd Omnipotent, art gracious ever,
 Thy goodneſs infinite but mildly warn'd us
 With mercy-blended wrath; O ſpare us ſtill,
 Nor ſend more dire conviction: we confeſs
 That thou art He, th' Almighty: we believe.
 For at thy righteous power whole ſyſtems quake,
 For at thy nod tremble ten thouſand worlds.

Hark! on the winged Whirlwind's rapid rage,
 Which is and is not in a moment—hark!
 On th' hurricane's tempeſtuous ſweep he rides

Invincible,

Invincible, and oaks and pines and cedars
 And forests are no more. For conflict dreadful!
 The West encounters East, and Notus meets
 In his career the Hyberborean blast.
 The lordly lions shudd'ring seek their Dens,
 And fly like tim'rous deer; the king of birds,
 Who dar'd the solar ray, is weak of wing
 And faints and falls and dies; — while He supreme
 Stands stedfast in the center of the storm.

Wherefore, ye objects terrible and great,
 Ye thunders, earthquakes, and ye fire-fraught wombs
 Of fell Volcanos, whirlwinds, hurricanes,
 And boiling billows hail! in chorus join
 To celebrate and magnify your Maker,
 Who yet in works of a minuter mould
 Is not less manifest, is not less mighty.

Survey the magnet's sympathetic love,
 That woos the yielding needle; contemplate
 Th' attractive amber's pow'r, invisible

Ev'n to the mental eye; or when the blow
 Sent from th' electric sphere assaults thy frame,
 Shew me the hand, that dealt it! — baffled here
 By his omnipotence Philosophy
 Slowly her thoughts inadequate revolves,
 And stands, with all his circling wonders round her,
 Like heavy Saturn in th' etherial space
 Begirt with an inexplicable ring.

If such the operations of his power,
 Which at all seasons and in ev'ry place
 (Rul'd by establish'd laws and current nature)
 Arrest th' attention; Who? O Who shall tell
 His acts miraculous, when his own decrees
 Repeals he, or suspends, when by the hand
 Of Moses or of Joshua, or the mouths
 Of his prophetic seers, such deeds he wrought,
 Before th' astonish'd Sun's all seeing eye,
 That Faith was scarce a virtue. Need I sing
 The fate of Pharaoh and his numerous band

Loft in the reflux of the watry walls,
 That melted to their fluid state again?
 Need I recount how Sampson's warlike arm
 With more than mortal nerves was strung t' o'erthrow
 Idolatrous Philistia? shall I tell
 How David triumph'd, and what Job sustain'd?
 — But, O supreme, unutterable mercy!
 O love unequal'd, mystery immense,
 Which angels long t' unfold! tis man's redemption
 That crowns thy glory and thy pow'r confirms,
 Confirms the great, th' uncontroverted claim.
 When from the Virgin's unpolluted womb
 Shone forth the Sun of Righteousness reveal'd,
 And on benighted reason pour'd the day;
 Let there be peace (he said) and all was calm
 Amongst the warring world---calm as the sea,
 When O be still, ye boisterous Winds, he cry'd,
 And not a breath was blown, nor murmur heard.
 His was a life of miracles and might,

And charity and love, e'er yet he taste
The bitter draught of death, e'er yet he rise
Victorious o'er the universal foe,
And Death and Sin and Hell in triumph lead.
His by the right of conquest is mankind,
And in sweet servitude and golden bonds
Were ty'd to him for ever. — O how easy
Is his ungalling Yoke and all his burdens
'Tis ecstasy to bear! Him blessed Shepherd
His flocks shall follow thro' the maze of life
And shades that tend to Day-spring from on high;
And as the radiant roses after fading
In fuller foliage and more fragrant breath
Revive in smiling spring, so shall it fare
With those that love him—for sweet is their favour,
And all eternity shall be their spring.
Then shall the gates and everlasting doors,
At which the *King of Glory* enters in,
Be to the Saints unbarr'd: and there, where pleasure

Boasts

Boasts an undying bloom, where dubious hope
Is certainty, and grief-attended love
Is freed from passion—there we'll celebrate
With worthier numbers, him, who is, and was,
And in immortal prowess King of Kings
Shall be the Monarch of all worlds for ever.

F I N I S.

Shall be the Monarch of all worlds for ever,
 And in immortal powers King of Kings;
 With warrior numbers him, who is, and was;
 Is freed from passion — there will celebrate
 Is certainty, and grief-attended love;
 Boasts an undying bloom, where dubious hope

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